

# Position Description

## 1715 Hour AmeriCorps Member

Interpretive Naturalist

Location: Flathead Lake State Park-Bigfork, MT



**Term of service:** January 16, 2024 – November 15, 2024

**Service schedule:** Member will serve a minimum of 1,715 hours over a 44-week term, averaging 41 hours per week with 80 hours of “Time Not Scheduled to Serve” to be used as sick, vacation, or other personal leave.

**Position Summary:** As the largest, natural, freshwater lake west of the Mississippi, Flathead Lake provides some of the best water-based recreational opportunities in the western United States, including fishing, camping, hiking, sightseeing, wildlife viewing, and boating. Because of its world-class recreational opportunities, Flathead Lake State Park receives over 300,000 visitors annually. With six state park units located around the lake, the park includes Wayfarers, Yellow Bay, Big Arm, Finley Point, West Shore, and Wild Horse Island—the only island state park in the Montana State Park system. At over 2,000 acres, Wild Horse Island is home to bighorn sheep, mule deer, waterfowl, bald eagles, falcons, and five wild horses.

This AmeriCorps position will be based out of the Flathead Lake Ranger Station located in Flathead Lake State Park – Wayfarers unit on the south side of Bigfork, Montana. Bigfork is a quaint, charming lakeside village with all the amenities of a larger town, conveniently located near world-class hiking, skiing, rafting, and fishing.

The AmeriCorps member will be exposed to a variety of experiences at Flathead Lake State Park. The main projects will be:

- Developing and leading a variety of guided hikes and evening programs
- Assisting with developing interpretive signs for the park units
- QR interpretive hike on Wild Horse Island
- Unit-specific nature ID booklets
- Leading community science programs
- Organizing and leading K-12 field trips

They will also increase volunteer capacity by recruiting volunteers to the parks and hosting projects with volunteers to improve parkland. In addition, the member will continue developing a relationship with Bigfork and Polson’s Schools. The member will develop park improvement and management skills by working on the trail systems and noxious weed mitigation. The member will also identify opportunities for projects that support the mission of FHLSP, future programs, events, and interpretive displays throughout Flathead Lake State Park.



Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps members perform capacity-building activities. Their service revolves around the program goals listed below to ensure that they do not displace workers or take part in any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations. Montana State Parks AmeriCorps members *will* likely participate in activities that involve recurring contact with vulnerable populations.

**Member will contribute to the following program goals:**

- Improve Parkland
- Expand educational and interpretive programs
- Increase volunteer capacity\*
- Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks
- Participate in service activities including National Days of Service\*\*
- Respond to disasters, when called upon to do so by the program

**Specific Position Responsibilities:**

- **Expand educational and interpretive programs**
  - Research and develop Interpretive signs for various units of Flathead Lake State Park
  - Monitor and edit the QR interpretive hike for Wild Horse Island State Park.
  - Research and develop unit-specific natural ID guidebooks to lend out to staff and visitors.
  - Develop and lead guided hikes and evening programs from the Spring through the Fall
  - Assist with the Summer Junior Ranger series focusing on relevant STEM topics, such as geology, marine biology, and wildlife management, and expand educational programming with the Bigfork and Polson School Districts
  - Assist in our Spring/Fall field trips
- **Improve Park Land:**
  - Assist with the annual trail events: Earth Day, NPLD, Trails Day, and Kids to Park Day
  - Assist with monitoring the nearly 10 miles of trails spread amongst the 6 units that we oversee. Conduct detailed trail inspections, coordinating volunteer events, and youth trail day events to tackle any projects.
  - Assist with coordinating several noxious weeds workdays with local groups or the public.

- **Increase volunteer capacity**
  - Help recruit and build a core group of community volunteers
    - Getting in touch with local non-profits whose mission lines up with ours to protect Flathead Lake
    - Coordinate guest speakers, program leaders and Table Talk guest presenters.
    - Coordinate reoccurring volunteer events over the summer
  - Coordinate at least two separate volunteer events and assist with planning a volunteer appreciation event.
  
- **Enhance outreach and awareness of state parks**
  - Lead Flathead Lake State Park's social media efforts
  - Develop posters advertising volunteer events and programs
  - Attend Local Farmer's Markets and local tabling events
  - Attend monthly Flathead CORE meetings
  - Represent Flathead Lake State Park at numerous events around the area

**Minimum Requirements:**

- Over 18 with a high school diploma or GED; college degree or equivalent work experience preferred
- A United States citizen, United States National, or legal permanent resident alien
- Demonstrated leadership skills
- Ability to take initiative, handle multiple projects, track details essential to project completion, analyze information, and meet deadlines
- Strong ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing with diverse groups of people
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Basic computer proficiency
- Passion for the outdoors and enthusiasm for enhancing Montana's state parks
- A driver's license and personal means of transportation within the state of Montana
- Must pass the requirements of the National Service Criminal History Check

**Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps 2024 Required Trainings and Events (subject to change):**

- January 16: First Day of Service
- January 22-25: Member Orientation; Lubrecht Experimental Forest
- March 4-8: Certified Interpretive Guide Training; Lubrecht Experimental Forest
- March 13-15: 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Serve Montana Symposium; Helena
- June 10-14: All Member Gathering; Lewis and Clark Caverns State Park
- July 19-20: Bannack Days; Bannack State Park
- August 31-September 1: Day of Honor; Chief Plenty Coups State Park

- November 14-15: Close of Service; Helena

### **Physical and Environmental Demands:**

- Work is performed in both an indoor and outdoor environment.
- Frequently works in adverse outdoor conditions including temperature extremes, snow and rain, dust, and mosquito-infested areas.
- Works with the public and may inform the public of site rules and regulations.
- May be required to lift over 25lbs across rugged terrain.
- The position may require some travel. The incumbent will be required to work odd hours, weekends, and holidays.

### **Benefits:**

- Living allowance of \$444.00/week (taxed) with a \$300.00/month housing stipend
- An AmeriCorps Education Award of \$6,895 upon successful completion of service. This award can be used to pay education costs at qualified institutions of higher education, for educational training and resources, or to repay qualified student loans. Members aged 55 and over may transfer the education award to a child, grandchild, or foster child.
- Eligible for deferment on qualified student loans
- Guaranteed health benefits and childcare assistance if qualified
- Experience and training working in the fields of outdoor recreation, parks management, interpretive services, education, community outreach, and volunteer management
- Opportunity to live, work and be part of the team amid the natural wonders and cultural heritage of Montana State Parks

### **To Apply:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps only accepts applications through the my.americorps.gov portal. To apply, you can follow the link [HERE](#) to our application within my.americorps.gov. Please note, there is only one application for all our 1715- hour positions, placement preference will be assessed during the interview process.

### **Application Deadline:**

Applications are due by December 8, 2023.

\* Volunteer activity facilitated by AmeriCorps members supports the management and operation of State Parks. These activities do not include any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations.

\*\*Service activities will center around the preceding program goals as well as provide unique opportunities for members to engage in service to non-profit community organizations that provide support to those in need, including victims of national disasters, individuals and families in poverty, veterans, homeless animals, and other groups. Service projects will take place on and around designated National Days of Service as well as other AmeriCorps organized events, such as member trainings. Service activities will not include any prohibited or unallowable activities as outlined in AmeriCorps regulations.

*The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks AmeriCorps Program, as administered by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, shall provide equal access to opportunities provided by the Program and shall not discriminate against any person because of race, creed, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. The accommodation must be essential for the Member to perform his/her service successfully. Funds for reasonable accommodations are available for use by members with disabilities who have been offered a position with an AmeriCorps Program and require accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of their service.*